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MARCH

1850.

THE  
PRINCETON MAGAZINE.

EDITED BY  
WILLIAM C. ALEXANDER.

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NO. I.

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SOLD BY JOHN T. ROBINSON, PRINCETON, N. J.; BAKER  
AND SCRIBNER, NEW YORK; WILLIAM S. MAR-  
TIEN, PHILADELPHIA.

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PRINCETON IN 1801.

In the spring of 1801 I passed through Princeton, on my way to New England, where I spent the summer. One object of my visit was to become acquainted with the flourishing colleges of the northern and eastern States; as many of the commencements as possible were therefore embraced in the tour. The failure of a horse in some degree frustrated the plan.

At Harvard, I had the pleasure of being introduced to President Willard, Professors Tappan, Pearson, and others. I was also able to attend the commencement at Dartmouth College. In passing from Massachusetts over the mountains of New Hampshire, I lodged within a few rods of the house of a farmer, the father of the Honourable Daniel Webster. The old gentleman came over to the tavern in the morning, and chatted for half an hour. Among other things he said that he had a son at Dartmouth, who was about to take his bachelor's degree. The father was large in frame, high-breasted and broad-shouldered, and, like his son, had heavy eyebrows. He was an affable man, of sound sense and considerable information, and expressed a wish that I might be

acquainted with his son, of whom it was easy to see that he was proud.

Arriving at Hanover, the seat of the College, a day or two before the commencement, I put up my horse and secured a room at one of the two public houses. On the morning of the commencement I presented my letters to President Wheelock, and was received with a profusion of ceremonious inclinations; for it was pleasantly said that the President suffered no man to have the last bow. This, it was reported, was put to the test by a person of some assurance, who undertook to compete with him in the contest of politeness. He accordingly took his leave, bowed himself out of the mansion, and continued to bow as long as he was upon the premises: but the President followed him to the gate, and remained in possession of the field. Dr. Wheelock was a man of learning, especially in the department of history. It was said that he had a great historical work in preparation, but none such ever appeared.

When I afterwards returned to the tavern, I was surprised to find the whole house filled with a strange and motley multitude. My own room was occupied by a company of gamblers, and the usual circle of lookers-on. I loudly asserted my claim to the room, threw myself on my reserved rights, and made appeal to the host. He declared himself unable to turn the people out: the Green Mountain Boys appeared to be good natured, but perfectly impracticable. At this juncture I began to consider my situation quite deplorable, when relief came from an unexpected quarter. A note was delivered to me from a gentleman of the village, inviting me to become his guest: by singular resolution he had kept exclusive possession of his house, the only one in Hanover exempt from invasion. I found ample room and hospitality. It appeared that a letter from Salem, Massachusetts, had named me to this worthy friend, as a clergyman of Virginia, making a first journey through New Eng-

land. In this house I made the acquaintance of the only other guest, the Reverend Theophilus Packard, now Doctor Packard; whom I accompanied to his home in Shelburne, and there spent a very happy, and as I think, profitable fortnight.

At the Dartmouth commencement, General Eaton, of eccentric memory, was marshal of the day, and was unceasing in busying himself about the order of the procession to the church; giving each graduate, of every college, the place due to his seniority. Among the speakers was young Daniel Webster. Little dreaming of his future career in law, eloquence, and statesmanship, he pronounced a discourse on the recent discoveries in Chemistry, especially those of Lavoisier, then newly made public.

Princeton was taken in my journey homeward. In this town, likewise, it was no easy matter to find a place to lay my head, so great was the concourse of strangers. But my friend Mr. Henry Kollock, afterwards distinguished as a preacher, and who had recently been a tutor in the college, kindly introduced me to the house of old Mrs. Knox, where the students of divinity had their abode.

The appearance of the Trustees and Professors struck me with awe. I seriously question whether such a body of men, for dignity and importance, as then composed the Board, could have been found in any part of the country. I need only name Dr. McWhorter, Elias Boudinot, LL.D., John Bayard, Esq., Dr. John Woodhull, the Hon. William Paterson, Dr. Green, the Rev. James F. Armstrong, the Hon. Richard Stockton, Governor Bloomfield, and Judge Wallace. The class then commencing Bachelors of Arts included the late Mr. Biddle, Mr. Robert Goodloe Harper, the Rev. Andrew Thompson, Mr. Henry E. Watkins, Professor Cook of Kentucky, the Rev. Dr. Johnson of Newburgh, and the Rev. Dr. John Mc Dowell of Philadelphia.

The President, Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith, I had seen in

Philadelphia, six or seven years before ; and certainly, viewing him as in his meridian, I have never seen his equal in elegance of person and manners. Dignity and winning grace were remarkably united in his expressive countenance. His large blue eye had a penetration which commanded the respect of all beholders. Notwithstanding the want of health, his cheek had a bright rosy tint, and his smile lighted up the whole face. The tones of his elocution had a thrilling peculiarity, and this was more remarkable in his preaching ; where it is well known that he imitated the elaborate polish and oratorical glow of the French school. Little of this impression can be derived from his published discourses, which disappoint those who do not know the charm of his delivery.

On this occasion Dr. Smith appeared to great advantage, for though he had passed his acme, he was erect and full of spirits. The formality used in the collation of degrees does not appear to be of much importance, but with the sonorous voice and imposing mien of President Smith, it added dignity to the scene, and left an indelible impression.

The College of New Jersey at that time contained some young men who were far above the ordinary level of attainments ; distinguished for a high sense of honour, which preserved them from the despicable courses in which misguided youth sometimes seek distinction. It was gratifying to observe, that these young men were the favourites of the President, and that, in their turn, they were strongly attached to him. Some of them still live, to reflect honour on their Alma Mater ; but I will not name those who occur to me, lest I do an unintentional injustice to the rest. Some, alas, are extinct ; but some may be found, shining as stars, with a mild but brilliant lustre, in the civil as well as the ecclesiastical firmament.

Doctor John Maclean, a native of Scotland, after pursuing the path of science with indefatigable zeal, so far as it



was open to him in Edinburgh and Glasgow, visited France, that he might avail himself of the increased facilities afforded for physical researches in the schools of Paris. After accomplishing this purpose, Dr. Maclean emigrated to America, in 1795, and became one of the most popular professors who ever graced the college. He was at home almost equally in all branches of science; Chemistry, Natural History, Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, successively claimed his attention. It is believed that he was one of the first to reproduce in America the views of the New French school in Chemistry: on this subject he waged a successful war with Dr. Priestley, the great champion for phlogiston. No one could attend a commencement at Princeton, without perceiving that Professor Maclean was, as it were, the soul of the faculty. He enjoyed the attachment of all the students, unless perhaps some of the idle and abandoned; it is these who, in all Colleges, display the opposite temper.

At the time of my visit, Dr. Maclean was in the prime of life, a gentleman of fine appearance, polished manners, and a disposition remarkable for kindness and cordiality. He is now remembered, as the students' friend, with sincere and tender attachment, by many of his surviving pupils. It is no part of these paragraphs, to follow any of the persons named into their subsequent life, but only to note these incidents of a day which was full of interest. After the other honorary degrees had been announced, the Trustees by a consultation at the moment on the stage agreed to confer on the writer the degree of Master of Arts; an act, which, it seems, was never entered on their minutes: and in the evening he was initiated into the American Whig Society.

## CHANGES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN AMERICA.

The progress of colonization in all ages has given rise to changes in language. Whether a sea or a mountain range is interposed, from the moment that the younger state is separated from the mother country, dialects begin to show themselves. It was only three hundred years after the Hebrews came into Palestine an undivided people, that they began to diverge in their pronunciation of the hissing sound. Only the Jordan was between them, yet one side said Shibboleth and the other Sibboleth, and the terms have become a proverb. The Greek colonies were not far distant from the parent state, but we know how soon a new sort of language formed itself. We do not perceive these changes while they are in progress, and yet the extremes of difference which they reach are marked and surprising.

Our own country is destined to exhibit some of the most remarkable phenomena in the formation of language. At this moment no language is spoken over so large a territory with uniformity, as the English in America; yet every practised ear at once detects the transatlantic mode of English speech, and in the older settlements provincial pronunciations, words and idioms are becoming more fixed every day. New England, Philadelphia, Virginia, and South Carolina especially have their infallible criteria: in course of time these may become as unlike as the Ionic and Doric, or as the German of the Alps and that of the Baltic.

Some problems in philology and ethnology are in the process of solution in our country, which connect themselves in a highly interesting way with the history of other nations; we mean especially those which concern the mingling of races and tongues. In former stages of our republic, the infusions from abroad were so small as to be scarcely worthy of note: the French and Dutch which prevailed in Louisiana and New York were soon absorbed into the general circulation.



Yet while the language of Holland is rapidly dying out of the old Dutch families on the North River and the Raritan, it has left some traces in the provincialisms and vulgarisms of the people. New Yorkers are known by their use of terms made out of the Dutch; *portaal*, *kohl-slaa*, and *stoep*. But a new stage in this progress of language-making is reached by the accession of German emigrants, not as in former years by hundreds, but by hundreds of thousands. During their earlier settlements in Pennsylvania, the process was going on to a considerable extent; how much more may we expect it now. In the borders of such counties as Berks and Lebanon, and in Reading and Easton, we have often been struck with instances both of the German-English and the English-German. Of the former, examples are numerous. Only a German or a Pennsylvanian would understand such idioms as "What *for a man* is Webster?" "Leave me go!" Yet these are common phrases in the Northern Liberties. So also *Chriskinkle*, a horrible burlesque of one of the most lovely diminutives in any tongue, namely, *Christ-kindchen*, or the infant Jesus. On the other side of the account, the Germans have taken from us *Stohr*, *Caunty*, and a multitude of words; with still more numerous idioms, and constructions, some of which are sufficiently amusing. Where the German colonies are of pure blood, they will retain such a dialect as may prevail in their native region, for many years; but even this must break down before such causes as the terms of law and politics, which are carried in with a tide by our courts and our constitution; while no cordon can keep out New England enterprise from their most sacred recesses.

It is a serious question how far this natural tendency of things should be meddled with, by religion, letters, or legislation. Meddle as we may, the most we can do is to take an inappreciable quantity from a mighty stream. There are causes operating here, which are as uncontrollable as the most rigid physical laws. Notwithstanding Dugald Stewart's

exploded whim, we can no more make a language than we can make a river. The very constancy of these laws of language is among our chief securities, in making ethnological deductions from linguistical data. Disturbing influences can but retard the progress. Such are the use of a language in divine service and schools; the publication of the laws in other tongues besides English; and above all the tender love which the best men feel for their vernacular. Examples of this mighty affection abound in history. One of the most touching instances is an analogy from the Hellenic colonies in Italy. The Sybarites, when subjected to the manlier Romans, still retained such a love for Greece, that when forced to adopt the Latin tongue, or as Aristoxenus expresses it, to be 'barbarized,' they were accustomed to assemble yearly, on one of the great festivals of their native land, in order to keep up the associations of their origin, to weep over their loss, and to address one another in their own beautiful Greek. We owe the affecting story to Athenaeus.

In the history of our forefathers, the same thing occurred, first in the resistance of the Celtie Britons to the Saxons, and then in the like resistance of the Saxons to the Normans. The same unequal struggle went on in Hungary, where it had the strange result that the common language of a large portion became and continues to be Latin. On a smaller field, we observe the same conflict in the Highlands and islands of Scotland, in Ireland, in the Isle of Man, in Cornwall, in Brittany, and in the Basque provinces.

It is a very safe prediction, that, a century hence, over and above the changes produced by the development of English by its internal forces, there will be extant a language in which the antiquary of that day will discern traces of continental tongues, and above all of the German. This will more remarkably be the case in those regions where the population has been homogeneous; as in Gasconade county in Missouri, and the district lying south of the Missouri river. But as in celestial mechanics, the attraction of the greater

by the lesser mass is sometimes incalculable, so here. the principal change will be in the predominance of the English tongue. Yet we should reason on a very insufficient basis, if we were to expect no wider deviations from our present tongue than such as we have hitherto observed from the scanty admixtures of Dutch and German in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Statistical calculators will not forget, that nearly two-fifths of the citizens of New York, according to the enumeration of 1845, were of foreign birth, and that including the children these form a majority in that city; and that in 1847 there arrived at that single port not less than seventy thousand Germans, to be dispersed through our land. In regard to this particular race, it is worthy of note, that the sameness of the original Teutonic stock, in German and English, renders the mingling of the tongues, to a certain extent, more easy than that of either would be with the dialects of southern Europe. The speculation here suggested, though perhaps trifling in the eyes of such as have not kept pace with the modern revelations in ethnology, opens interesting prospects, in regard to the future destinies of our singularly expanding nation, and connects itself with every question of law, colonization, civil progress, learning, and religion.

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### BLINDNESS.

'Tis a world where blind men wander  
Through ten thousand flowery ways,  
Thickets hung with tendrils fonder,  
Than the infant when he plays  
Clinging 'mid the hushing lays.

Hoodwinked throng of mortals straying  
Through tall woods, by margins green,  
Till blue mountains broad displaying  
Changeful hues afar are seen,  
Sightless ones ! they plod serene.

On they journey, stupid ever,  
Rose or rainbow nought to them,  
Glens where founts the granite sever,  
Grottoes rough with many a gem,  
Gardens which the smooth lake hem.

Forward, thronging, all are going,  
Nought care they where streamlets wind,  
Silent springs or torrents flowing,  
All alike are left behind—  
Still they travel ;—they are blind.

Eyes they have for sleep and winking,  
Outlets for the brine of tears,  
Sometimes wearied they are sinking,  
But they look not, in their fears ;  
Nought in all around appears.

Clouds of heaven sometimes hover,  
Morning dapple, evening-red,  
But to our blind race discover  
Not one glory over-head ;  
Sure they are not less than dead.

Angels glide from upper heaven  
Radiant with the garb of dawn,  
Yet the darklings have not given  
One look higher than the lawn  
Their weary footsteps tread upon.

'Tis our world of dead wayfarers,  
'Tis a fable of our souls ;  
Steady, constant, like corpse-bearers  
On the dark procession rolls,  
While the booming death-bell tolls.

Nought believing, nought inquiring  
Of the better world above,  
Sightless joying, sightless grieving,  
Blind to God, and blind to love,  
Deathward all unknowing move.

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## PROVINCIAL COURTS OF NEW JERSEY.\*

This beautifully printed book forms the third volume of the collections of the New Jersey Historical Society, and is a valuable addition to the literature of the country. It is the result of great research and much labour, and although the subject "addresses itself in a peculiar manner to members of a single profession," the author, who is a distinguished member of the New Jersey Bar, has succeeded in producing not only an instructive but a highly attractive volume. Although Courts of Justice existed in New Jersey as early as the year 1668, it was not until the year 1675 that they were regularly established by legislative enactment ; and in the courts as then organized we may trace the germ of our present judicial system. The laws to be administered were few and simple, and as would be thought from their examination wholly inadequate to the object intended. But the first settlers of New Jersey brought with them as their

\*The Provincial Courts of New Jersey, with sketches of the Bench and Bar. A Discourse read before the New Jersey Historical Society by Richard S. Field. New York : 1849. Bartlett and Welford. pp. 311.

“birthright” and “inheritance,” the Common Law of England, whose “abundant resources supplied all their deficiencies.” They possessed too under the name of “Grants and Concessions” a constitution given to them by the first Proprietors, Berkley and Carteret, and it is an interesting fact that the inhabitants of New Jersey have never lived under any other than a free constitution, “that there is not one barren waste of despotism in all her colonial story, not one hour when Jerseymen were slaves to the unrestrained and uncovenanted power of any master.”\* These concessions, which were issued on the tenth day of February, 1664, breathed the spirit of genuine freedom, and were substantially the same with the constitution under which we lived until the adoption of our present system in 1844. They proclaimed religious liberty in its fullest extent, declaring that no man should be molested, disquieted, or called in question for any difference of opinion or practice in matters of religion. They declared that “no tax, custom, or duty whatsoever, should upon any colour or pretence be imposed upon the inhabitants but by the authority of the General Assembly.” They offered to the people a free plan of government, a Governor, a legislature composed of a Council and Assembly elected annually by the people, and a judiciary adapted to the infant state of the colony. They in fact proclaimed those important and fundamental principles, in defence and maintenance of which, the inhabitants of the American colonies, more than a century later, were driven to the last resort of freemen, and compelled to pass through a long and bloody conflict, which eventuated in the total dissolution of all political connection between those Colonies and the “State of Great Britain,” and their permanent establishment as “free and independent States.” Even at this early day, the elements of resistance were to be found in the infant colony; for we learn from the colonial

\* Hon. S. L. Southard.



records of the day, that at the meeting of the legislature on the third day of November, 1668, four of the members elected refused to take the oath of allegiance and fidelity, and were in consequence expelled from the house; and that in the same year the inhabitants of Shrewsbury and Middletown refused to pay the quota of tax assessed upon them.

It is certainly a most extraordinary circumstance, that so free a Constitution, founded upon principles of enlarged and rational liberty, should have been furnished to the people by Lord Berkley and Sir George Carteret, courtiers of Charles the II, and deriving their title to New Jersey from the Duke of York. Mr. Field accounts for this circumstance from the fact that New Jersey was at that time a wilderness, and to make it of any value to the Proprietors, it was necessary that it should be peopled. It had no mines of gold or silver to tempt the cupidity of adventurers, other lands, more fair and fertile and equally accessible, were open to the emigrant. Hence, settlers were to be allured by tempting offers of the largest liberty. The Concessions were published and circulated both in England and throughout the Colonies. Emissaries were sent to New England to proclaim that beyond the Hudson was to be found a safer and a securer asylum for freedom; and Puritans were soon seen flocking to the banks of the Passaic and Raritan. The "Grants and Concessions" of Berkley and Carteret were given to East Jersey. Those of the Proprietors of West Jersey were still more liberal, and we yield our hearty assent to the opinion expressed by our author, "That a more beautiful fabric of free government was never reared." The account given of the early settlement of West Jersey is singularly interesting, and will richly reward the labour of perusal. The author apologizes for dwelling at such length on the early history of our State, adding—"but there is a charm about it which it is difficult to resist." We have truly found it so, and reluctantly pass on to the other topics discussed in the volume.

On the surrender by the Proprietors of all their rights, to the crown, the colonial existence of New Jersey may be said to have commenced. The first session of the Supreme Court was held at Burlington, on the second day of November, 1704, and the volume before us contains a highly entertaining account of the proceedings at that and its succeeding sessions, with interesting sketches of the chief and associate justices of the Provincial Courts. Of Roger Mompesson, the first Chief Justice, a descendant of William Mompesson, the pious and heroic Rector of Eyam, who during the plague in 1666, performed the functions of both priest and physician, during the whole period of the calamity, to his afflicted parishioners. Of his successor, Thomas Gordon, the acute and inflexible Scotchman, noted for his decided and unyielding opposition to the administration of the profligate Lord Cornbury. Of David Jameson, distinguished by his able and intrepid defence of Francis McKemie, a Presbyterian clergyman, who was arrested by Lord Cornbury and subjected to indignity, imprisonment and persecution for preaching without license in the vicinity of New York. Of William Trent, from whom the capital of our State derives its name, it having for a long time been called Trent's Town. Of Hooper, and Farmar, and Smyth, the latter of whom was the last Chief Justice of the Colony of New Jersey. He was appointed on the seventeenth of October, 1764, and continued in office until the adoption of the Constitution of 1776. The colleagues of Judge Smyth, on the bench of the Supreme Court at the breaking out of the American Revolution, were David Ogden and Richard Stockton. In speaking of David Ogden, the author says, "The name of Ogden seems to belong in an especial manner to the Bar of New Jersey. For the last hundred and twenty years, never has there been a time when the profession has not been graced by at least one eminent individual of that name."

With the name of Richard Stockton, who is not familiar? A citizen of Princeton, and a member of the first class that

ever graduated from the College of New Jersey—an institution, a large portion of whose pupils passed from her walls to the ranks of the revolutionary army, and of whose four hundred and sixty-three students graduated before the Revolution, not one proved “recreant or apostate to the cause of liberty.” An institution which “gave up her staff and her stay to her country, when her Witherspoon wended his way to the first Congress, to pledge life, fortune, and sacred honour in behalf of the land of his adoption, and who gave the first fruits of her academic labours, when her Stockton affixed his name to the same glorious instrument.” Richard Stockton was born, lived and died in Princeton, which is still the residence of his descendants, among whom is numbered the author of this volume. Mr. Stockton suffered much in the cause of his country. His estate was laid waste, his property pillaged and destroyed, he was subjected to insult and indignity, and underwent an ignominious and cruel imprisonment, which doubtless shortened his valuable life. He expired at his residence in Princeton, on the twenty-eighth day of February, 1781. His remains were taken to the chapel of the College, where a funeral discourse was pronounced by the Vice President, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith, in the course of which he said: “It was one of his earliest honours to have been a son of this College, and it was one of the first honours of this College to have given birth to such a son.”

In the account given in this work of the Court of Chancery, Mr. Field corrects an error into which some historians have fallen, in supposing that the first Court of Chancery ever held in New Jersey was in 1718, and shows that there had always been such a Court in the Province, that under the Proprietary Government it was a part of the Court of Common Right, and that as early as 1705, Lord Cornbury, by virtue of his commission as Governor, and with the advice and consent of the Council, passed an ordinance for the erection and establishment of a High Court of Chancery in the Province of New Jersey.

It is worthy of note, in connection with the history of the periodical literature of our country, that the first periodical of any description published in New Jersey, and the second magazine of the kind on the continent, was edited by the Hon. Samuel Nevill, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court, of whom a sketch is given in the work before us. It was called the *New American Magazine*, and was printed at Woodbridge, in the county of Middlesex. The first number appeared in January, 1758, and it continued to appear regularly until March, 1760, when it was discontinued for want of patronage. It is to be hoped that a different fortune awaits those who, in the present more enlightened age, venture in the same path of literary enterprise.

The notices of the Provincial Judges of New Jersey involve, to a great extent, the history of the stirring times in which they lived and acted; and Mr. Field has made the best use of his materials. He has selected his incidents with taste and discrimination, and has presented them to the public in a style peculiarly graceful and pleasing. We would venture to suggest that, when the next edition of this volume is published, the author should discard the form of an address, and also incorporate the valuable and interesting matter contained in the notes to this edition with the body of the work.

We agree with Mr. Field that the history of New Jersey remains to be written, and that when it is, "it will be found to possess an interest which has never been thought to attach to the annals of our State." There is a circumstance which is alluded to in a note to this volume, which will furnish materials for an interesting and important chapter in the history of the State. It is the fact that, while in other sections of the country the Indians were duped or coerced into a sale of their lands, the settlers giving beads and baubles for an empire, or marking every step of their acquisition with violence and blood, not an inch of the territory of New Jersey was obtained from the aboriginal possessors, except by fair and honest purchase. This

it was that induced the Six Nations, in Convention at Fort Stanwix in 1769, to confer upon New Jersey the title of the "*Great Doer of Justice*," and which prompted the venerable Delaware Chief, Bartholomew Calvin, in an address made to the Legislature of the State in 1832, to say, "*Not a drop of our blood have you spilled in battle—not an acre of our land have you taken but by our consent*;" and to declare that "nothing save benizens" could fall upon our State from the lips of a Lenni Lennapi. We hope to see the history of New Jersey written, and we know no one who could better discharge that duty than the accomplished author of the "Provincial Courts."

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## A PRIVATE LETTER FROM A PUBLIC LETTER- WRITER.

SMITHVILLE, March 20, 1850.

MY DEAR GENERAL,

I sit down at once to answer your inquiries with respect to our profession and your prospect of succeeding in it. To a stranger, I should write with more reserve; but your generous assistance in procuring me a situation, first as a bar-keeper, then as a school-master, then as an itinerant lecturer, and lastly as an editor, gives you a claim to share in all the knowledge and experience that I have been enabled, partly by your friendship, to acquire. I begin then by saying with all candour, that the trade is at present rather overstocked; but I lose no time in adding, that in this, as in the other liberal professions, there are blanks and prizes, so that the number of competitors does not destroy the chances of success in any single case. I know of several country papers, which would be delighted to obtain a cheap but taking correspondent. Among these are the *Talented American* and *Semi-weekly Advertiser*, of Thompsonburg, the *Farm-*



er's and Mechanic's Journal and Independent Morning Star and Telegraph of Springfield, and the Weekly Washingtonian of New Washington. Having been connected with them all, in the way of my profession, I can take the liberty of recommending you to either, unless something better should present itself. In the mean time let me give you a few hints derived from my experience and needed to correct certain errors into which I perceive that you have fallen. You are right in supposing that your letters, in order to succeed, must be dated from Washington or one of the great cities or from foreign parts. But you are greatly mistaken in believing that they must be written there, and that your personal presence at any of those points is therefore indispensable. I could easily show you, as to all of them, that no such thing is requisite, though perfectly allowable, and on the whole desirable, if quite convenient. For the present I confine myself to Washington City, as confessedly the greatest focus of epistolary commerce in the country. If in reference to this grand centre, I can satisfy you that the supposed necessity of being there in propria persona is a mere chimera, you will certainly dispense with any proof as to the others. This I propose to accomplish not by reasoning, but by simply stating a few facts and laying down a few rules furnished by my own experience. In the first place, then, I beg leave to inform you, that my letters from Washington, six years ago, to the Bonfire and Beacon Light of Tyler City, those to the Register and Plough Boy two years later, and the series published last year in the Washingtonian, of which you are pleased to speak in terms so flattering, were all composed in this good town (I should say city) of South Smithville, at the very table where I am inditing this epistle. Do you ask how this is possible? I answer by propounding my first rule, which is as follows. Take the latest telegraphic news of which you can obtain possession and put it into an epistolary form, with date and signature and postscript of the most authentic fashion. The cheapest and best stuffing, to impart



the necessary bulk, is composed of two ingredients. One of these is epithets, applied to speakers, speeches, bills, resolutions, messages, measures, administrations, and whatever else you chance to introduce as themes or topics. These epithets, if properly put down, will keep for several seasons, and indeed until the fashion in slang-phrases changes, and even then you would only have to drop one or two, retaining all the rest until the next change. There are some indeed which have remained in vogue since I began to practise, such as "chaste," "splendid," "luminous," "talented," "thrilling," together with some doublets, such as "frank and fearless," and a dozen more which I have neither time to recollect nor room to record. The other ingredient in this cheap and wholesome stuffing is quotation, which can be had at any shop, or indeed on any shelf, where a half of an old Shakespeare happens to be lying, or still better at a theatre, if you are living near one, as you then can get the fresh pure slang of all the modern plays, without the trouble of opening a book, and free from the musty flavour of old writers. On another occasion, it will give me pleasure to exhibit my own stock of cured and smoke-dried scraps and, if you please, to share it with you. But at present, I must hasten to propound my second rule or recipe which, besides being valuable in itself, will greatly enhance the effect of the first, by adding without labour to the bulk of your production. The second rule is, to take sides as a thorough-going partisan, so as not only to express an opinion of your own upon the merits of all questions, but to characterize speeches and debates, in every case, on party grounds. Never even seem to admit for a moment, that a speaker on the other side can have a ray of common sense or a particle of information. Such concessions may be well enough in England, and for lumbering affairs like the Times or Daily News; but they will not do for us. You need not think of joining our fraternity unless you can persuade yourself to act upon the maxim, that the men upon the right side (as you think it) always write

best, speak best, and behave best, in deliberative bodies. This will save you an immensity of trouble in discriminating and distinguishing, according to the actual performances in every individual case, to do which with success would indeed require you to be actually present. But by following this simple rule, I can sit here in my office at Smithville, and without a possibility of error, give an accurate account of every speech, as to argument and eloquence, and even as to its effect upon the looks and deportment of the audience. Here too it will be found economical to keep on hand a good assortment of preserved or pickled phrases, in two different parcels, for the use of the two parties. If the name of a speaker on your own side is transmitted by the telegraph, sit down quickly and describe his speech, not by its contents, which cannot yet be known to you, but by its general qualities, inferred from the political position of the speaker. Such a speech may be always safely eulogized as luminous, and logical, and chaste, and all that, while a speech from the opposite direction may be no less safely blackballed in advance, as empty, incoherent, and declamatory. If however you have reason to suspect that its logic bore down rather hard upon your own side of the question, you had better speak of it beforehand as "most scurrilous." The favourite term in our peculiar dialect for unanswerable reasoning on the other side is "ribaldry." So too with respect to the effect produced upon the spot. You need not wait for the Washington papers to inform you, that a speech from your own side of the question always makes the adverse party, and especially the adverse speaker, "quail," and may therefore with advantage be described as "scathing," "withering," and what not. These descriptions, it is true, may seem astounding or ridiculous to those who were present at the scene you have thus described. They may laugh or wonder when they read that a member, who perhaps was absent, or absorbed in a newspaper with his feet upon his desk, during the utterance of a certain speech, had turned pale, trembled, or

in short had "quailed" at its delivery; or that a bit of twaddle, which had passed unnoticed at the time of its enunciation, was felt by one half of the hearers or non-hearers to be "withering" &c. But then your letters, as you well know, will be written not for the use of Congress but for "news into the country," and the only caution necessary will be to avoid such a vast accumulation of these witherings and quailings, upon any one occasion, as might seem to leave the house a desolation and its members in the last stage of paralysis. The only other rule that I shall lay down in this letter is, that you must keep up with the boldest and least scrupulous of your contemporaries in professing to be deep in the confidence of all the notabilities, both foreign and domestic. It will never do to hesitate or doubt as to the views or motives or intentions of the cabinet, the party-leaders, or the diplomatic corps, or any individual of either class, whose movements may be at the moment objects of interest or curiosity. The mistakes you will inevitably make are nothing to the life which these disclosures will impart to your communications and the éclat which you will acquire by a few successful guesses, even though outnumbered, ten to one, by the most atrocious blunders. Of these the only safe corrective is to let them alone, and never upon any pretext to retract, explain, or qualify, however slightly, what you have once distinctly said, however falsely. These very crude suggestions, gathered wholly from my own experience, are entirely at your service, my dear General, and can easily be multiplied, if you desire it, in a subsequent communication. In the mean time allow me to assure you with what pleasure I shall welcome your accession to the ancient and honourable brotherhood of Letter Writers. Do not scruple, I entreat you, to command my services, if you should need them, as a referee or signer of certificates, attesting your capacity or previous achievements, as a talented, chaste, luminous, and splendid writer, before whose performances the whole world (on the other side) may be expected, first to quail, and then to wither.

## PRIVATE ELOQUENCE.

Among the Greeks and Romans, oral discourse was in its glory, having no such rivals as sermons, lectures, reviews, and newspapers. The dialogues of Plato and Cicero, though often imaginary conversations, as much as any of Fenelon's or Landor's, give us doubtless an exact representation of the tone and character of easy talk among men of letters in Athens and Rome, and there is nothing about these productions more delightful than the openings thus afforded into everyday life. In this by-play, we give the preference to the Roman. In almost every one of his dialogues, even on the profoundest subjects, the introduction presents a background to the scene which transports us to Tusculanum or Puteoli. For an example take the grave dialogues *De Legibus*, where Cicero, which is rarely the case, appears in his own person, conversing with his brother Quintus and his exquisite, and indispensable, but time-serving friend, Atticus. What in England are called state-dinners, are not without ancient resemblance in several instances. Public dinners or *coenae*,—for the prandium was but a lunch—afforded a chance for free display. Students remember the bitter pleasantry against Verres, that he dined not only *in publico*, but *de publico*: it may be still affirmed of some. The little work *De Partitione Oratoria* is an easy conversation between Cicero and his son. Passages of much beauty are to be found in all the dialogues, illustrative of the social habits of polite Romans, and the value set upon conversational eloquence; and each of these is a little picture, occasionally with the adjuncts of landscape, trees, brooks, buildings, and (as in the Laws) the gentle play of the surf. If we had any complete remains of genuine Roman comedy, we might learn as much of the gaieties of common parlance, as Aristophanes has taught us concerning Athens. But Plautus, with all his *vis comica*, is rugged with the gross fun of a sturdier period;

and at best he only reproduced the Greeks; and Terence, familiar as he was with two of the most celebrated talkers of his age, is little else than a Latin Menander. It is almost unnecessary to say, that state matters were talked over, and often settled, then as now, out of the senate-house, at banquets and country houses. But we have no Campbell to lift the curtain, and reveal the effective gossip of ancient Loughboroughs and Eldons.

Conversational tact and power have scope in lobbies and committee rooms; and it is well known that the heavy work of legislation is done in these less public places. It is not always, perhaps not often, that great ten-hour speeches turn the ship of state. There are men of weak voice and bashful mien, who yet have their turn at the helm. No reporter sends abroad the broken discourses, uttered in hushed voices, in ante-rooms, coaches, and offices, at dead of night, which seal the fate of bills, and rend or heal commonwealths.

The daily intercourse of statesmen, during the hours of relaxation from public business, has an influence on national affairs, which is not easily computed, and which indeed is not generally known. To one unacquainted with the odd and indirect way in which the world is governed, it is strange to see orators who have been all day darting rhetorical bolts at each other across the hall of legislation, walking home arm in arm or exchanging badinage at the evening assembly. It marks an evil day when such courtesies are altogether proscribed. Free social intercourse thus tends to still the agitation of political turmoil, and many a wound of the Senate House is healed in the familiar meeting. In the history of diplomacy, the powerful intervention of the gentler sex has been acknowledged to be sometimes irresistible. The soirées of the Revolution were only less mighty than the clubs. Even when not ostensibly political, like the reunions at Madame Roland's, they had their effect on leading minds, and so on government and legislation.

It is not every man who can shine equally in the public



and the private circle. Great men are sometimes saturnine and inflexible, determined to be heroes even to their valets de chambre. Some who are prodigious in their heavy armour, are awkward and slipshod by the fireside. It was the reverse with the Elder Pitt, with Fox, with Erskine, and even with Eldon, who with little literature after he left Oxford, and with very dubious wit, was nevertheless free and easy in his broad humour. Hamilton and Burr, differing as they did even to death, were both endowed with this faculty. Jefferson was an ordinary speaker in public, but of extraordinary influence over individuals. John Quincy Adams, without any competitor in learning among his countrymen, and bred in all the great courts, was certainly instructive in private, but cold and tardy. The fascination of Jackson was acknowledged by his enemies, and Mr. Clay can never be surpassed in the warm persuasiveness of his common talk. Mr. Calhoun, the absence of whose voice we are called to lament, is possessed of a peculiar intensity of downright manner, which impresses and commands all who come within his circle. Among our statesmen and orators, no one can ever forget the easy attractive flow of the late Mr. Southard, who perhaps owed his early rise as much to this as to his ready elocution and manly reasoning. But there are hundreds in the legislative bodies and thousands out of them, who are perpetually operating on public sentiment by their powers of conversation; powers altogether independent of the ability which shows itself in the arena of debate. The conditions of eminence in public speaking are mysterious, and defy all prediction. Erskine's debut in the case of Captain Baillie was unforeseen and wonderful. The same may be said of Pitt. These men were perhaps astonished at themselves. On the other hand D'Israeli was long before he could command a hearing; and Macaulay even now shines in the House of Commons chiefly by reflection from his works without. Just so is it with colloquial ability; the fruit of a long, peculiar, but generally unintentional culture;



obtained in hours of ease, by those who bring little study to the onset, and who task neither themselves nor their hearers. It is very doubtful whether Dr. Johnson, the prince of debaters, or Coleridge, the enchanter in lofty disputation, could have kept their laurels in parliament, or held out longer than single-speech Hamilton.

Great talkers are not always eloquent, and never so when they mean to be. It is commonly when least casting about for method or words, that the heaviest blows are struck in the social battle. Excellence here is widely remote from great stores: Lord Bacon has noted the distinction in his *Essays*. We have seen great philosophers who were deep wells without buckets, as well as rattling conversers who were all windlass but no water.

So much stress is laid upon speeches, books, and printed matter, that, in our humble judgment, gross injustice is done to the no less potent operation of common talk between man and man. Of the latter, the aggregate quantity is of course vastly greater. What is said is uttered with as much increase of the velocity, as diminution of the mass. These repeating rifles do marvellous execution, even when compared with thirty-six pounders. The shots tell, and opinions, as we all know, are more easily changed, where there are no witnesses: and is not the change of opinion the object sought in debate?

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## THE RECONSTRUCTION OF SOCIETY.

### A PATRIOTIC SONG.

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AIR—*The University of Gottingen.*

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#### I.

When others, once as poor as I,  
Are growing rich because they try,

While my capacity and will  
Give me a taste for sitting still ;  
When all around me are at work,  
While I prefer to act the Turk,  
Or spend in drinking or at play  
The greater part of every day ;  
And, as the upshot of it, feel  
That I must either starve or steal ;  
The only remedy I see  
For such abuses, is the re-  
                    construction of society,  
Construction of society.

## II.

When others know what I know not,  
Or bear in mind what I forgot  
An age ago, and dare to speak  
In praise of Latin and of Greek,  
As if a tongue unknown to me  
Of any earthly use could be ;  
When bookworms are allowed to rule  
In University and School,  
While I, because I am a fool,  
Or happen, by the merest chance,  
To have learned nothing save to dance,  
Am set aside, or thrust away,  
Or not allowed to have my say ;  
The only remedy I see  
For such abuses, is the re-  
                    construction of society,  
Construction of society.

## III.

When judges frown and parsons scold,  
Because a gentleman makes bold

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To laugh at superstitious saws,  
And violate oppressive laws ;  
When pinching want will not atone  
For taking what is not your own ;  
When public sentiment proscribes  
The taking of judicial bribes,  
And with indignant scorn regards  
The gentleman who cheats at cards ;  
When men of wit no longer dare  
To tell a lie, or even swear ;  
The only remedy I see  
For such abuses, is the re-  
          construction of society,  
Construction of society.

## IV.

When, after turning round and round,  
And occupying every ground,  
As preacher, poet, rhetorician,  
Philanthropist and politician,  
Ascetic, saint and devotee,  
Neologist and pharisee,  
I seek in vain to gain respect  
By founding a new-fangled sect,  
And find the world so cautious grown  
That I must be the sect alone ;  
The only remedy I see  
For such abuses, is the re-  
          construction of society,  
Construction of society.

## V.

When, over and above the scorn  
Of men, which leaves me thus forlorn,

I find an enemy within  
Who dares to talk to me of sin,  
And whispers, even in my dreams,  
That my disorganizing schemes  
Can never conjure black to white,  
Or clearly prove that wrong is right,  
A nuisance that can never cease  
Till conscience learns to hold its peace,  
And men no longer can be awed  
By apprehensions of a God—  
Ah! these are griefs for which I see  
No solace even in the re-  
                  construction of society,  
Construction of society.

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## EDUCATION AMONG MERCHANTS.

Ours is a country in which the merchants are princes, as truly as in ancient Tyre. The little boy who is sweeping out the store, or carrying the parcel from the post, or marking the case of goods, may be mayor of a great city; or he may be a minister plenipotentiary; or he may command armies; or he may be president of the United States. Even if none of these things happen, great merchants, who become great capitalists, have more reason to be warned against pride, than stirred up to a sense of their importance. There is no social rank in America which is not reached and adorned by mercantile men.

Wealth does not necessarily bring refinement. A millionaire, who lives in a palace, and has thirty thousand dollars laid out by his agents for copies of paintings in Rome, Florence and the Louvre; who keeps several carriages, has a princely villa, ponies for his boys, whiskered Pandours for

his girls, libraries and champagne for his company, a pew in the most brilliant church and a box at the opera, may nevertheless be an ignoramus. An ignoramus he assuredly is, if he has bestowed his whole time on merchandize, to the neglect of science and letters; and this is the very tendency of things among the mercantile class. Leaving all moral considerations out of view, the current of feeling and practice sets strongly towards mere success in business, and rapid fortunes, without regard to mental cultivation; in Philadelphia, New York, New Orleans, Boston and Cincinnati. Many a man comes to deplore this when it is too late. His accomplished daughter, his graduated and travelled sons deplore it; but a handful of bonds and mortgages cannot buy refinement. The evil is enormous, and arises from want of foresight. He meant to be rich and to be fashionable, but he never foresaw that his new position would bring demands for mental acquisition. The brilliant instances of exception, in the case of some distinguished scholars among merchants, only throw the mass into deeper shade.

The chief cause of this evil is obvious: it is the absorption of mind in the ways and means of wealth. Is there any hurry on earth more feverish and constant than that of merchants? It increases with their prosperity. Vary as it may in different branches of business, it reigns in all. Great merchants tell us, as they tell their wives, that it is neck or nothing. The business of a leading house cannot be carried on moderately. If the concern is not pressed to its utmost, trade will flow into other channels. *Festina lente* might do for Augustus, but not for the rising merchant. What can such a man devote to letters? Half the year, half our city-men do not dine at home. In certain directions, their minds are wonderfully trained, to exquisite sharpness; in all that concerns trade, exchange, currency, customs, and such parts of politics as mingle with these. But their education is from the ledger, the newspaper, the bank, and the exchange. The fact is patent, that a man may become mighty in wealth,

while his thoughts have been conducted for half a century in a very narrow channel.

These undeniable propositions show the advantage of going to school awhile in one's boyhood, and of getting a taste for books. We say a taste for books, because many a man, who sits of a Sunday evening in a regal fauteuil, under a resplendent gas-light, with the heaviest gold eye-glass, reading the most gloriously gilded volume, does not know whether his book is not upside down, while his lips are muttering, "Deduct half the interest at seven per cent,—eight thousand and fifty-five dollars and one cent." What stupidity to say that a boy need not go to college because he is to be a merchant! It is the reason of reasons why he should go forthwith, and why he should have a double allowance of all a college can give. As well might you say, I will give my horse no oats this morning, because I mean to ride all day without drawing bridle. We are willing to put this to the vote of all those eminent merchants who came to the desk with a liberal education: they know full well that the mathematics, physies, political economy, chemistry, and classical reading have in no degree damaged their finances. Next to these, we should like to have the voice of that increasing class, who without the formalities of academic learning, or degrees have wisely managed to keep up a constant familiarity with the best authors. We rejoice to number such among our choicest friends. For a companion commend us to an intelligent and accomplished man of business. In such a one we have the temper of the blade without the rust of closets. It is not a fine library, nor even multifarious reading, which insures this sort of accomplishment. The well-bestowed evenings of busy days suffice for immense accumulation; much more for all the graces of letters. Who has not observed, at horticultural shows, that the prizes for luscious pears and sunny apricots are half the time carried, not by the gardener, but by some eccentric tailor or clergyman who trains a single tree beside his window? So it is with learn-



ing, the ripest fruits often fall into the lap of those who cherish books as their diversion. But accomplishment in commercial cities is difficult; requiring self command, reserve, long-sighted providence, love of home, freedom from the toy-yoke of fashion, and above all quiet of mind. Go on, if you choose, full speed after the highest gains; sit up over orders and invoices; let your children see you only at breakfast and on Sundays; keep it up your fifteen, your twenty years; and then retire to your elegant country residence: *nota bene*, you will find yourself destitute of the capacity to enjoy that retreat. No man can safely predict that at a certain day he will retire. That which was his task-master has become a fatal and indispensable necessity. Thousands realize the truth of Coleridge's story about the wealthy London soap-boiler who retired from that savoury business: after trying elegant leisure for a year, he begged his late partners, that he might be allowed "to look in on boiling days." Ah! it is Esop's fable of the cat turned fine lady: she would be mousing. Habits are habits; and the retiring merchant should have learned that the secret is to retire every day. Neither religion nor quiet can be bought; neither religion nor quiet can be taken, after a prescribed term of years, in the lump. Salt is an agreeable condiment, but a hogshhead of it all at once at the end of one's career would be *un peu fort*: yet this is what business men plan for. By the time the hurried man reaches that period of retirement, his blessed wife has grown grey, and the children with whom he might have chatted of books and mighty deeds, every day for twenty years, have escaped from the home which in his zeal for money he visited more as a guest than a father. We say again, men of business who would enjoy literary retirement must begin betimes; they must retire every day. You reply, it is impossible, in the present state of mercantile life. Very well; then the state is a wrong, a wretched and a perilous one, intellectually and morally. You may help to keep it up, and make yourselves as rich,

apoplectic and miserable as you please. Our hope is that your children will read this homily, and do better.



## FREEDOM OF SPEECH.

However jealous we may be of this prerogative in politics and social life, there is one department in which we are far from enjoying its perfection. I refer to composition and the use of language for rhetorical or literary purposes. That so few of our educated young men become eminent as writers, may be owing to this very restriction. Knowing something by experience, as well as observation, of its sad effects, I may perhaps do some one a kind office by a simple statement of my case, leaving others to derive from it such precepts and examples as may seem to be afforded by the narrative.

I was taught when young that in order to write well I must be careful to use words in their established and familiar meanings, and that in order to do this, I must know precisely what I meant, as well as how to say it. Upon these fundamental rules I practised many years, and am purposely adhering to them in these prefatory observations, for the purpose of showing their necessary tendency to produce a dry and rigid style. Another rule of the same kind is the one requiring some coherence in the thoughts, if not a close logical connection. By adhering to this antiquated method for some years I was at last convinced, that I could never accomplish any thing by means of it, and under this conviction was about to abandon the whole effort in despair, when it was happily suggested to my mind, that these rules of composition were tyrannical restrictions imposed by arbitrary power on the human mind, and therefore gross violations of that precious and inalienable birth-right, Freedom of Speech.

This idea I soon carried out to its remotest consequences, and thus reached the conclusion, that the customary requisition of precision in the use of words, distinctness in the thoughts, and coherent unity in the discourse, is ruinous to all ease and fertility in writing, and that a general emancipation of men's minds from this degrading bondage would inevitably flood the world with an abundance and variety of writings, both in prose and verse, sufficient to supply the whole race with "light reading" to the end of time. Were this discovery introduced into our colleges and schools, and there allowed to supersede the old and worthless rules of rhetoric, who knows but that every man, nay every child, might soon become an author? That a consummation so devoutly to be wished is not by any means chimerical, I undertake to prove by my own experience. I have said already that I never could write any thing, at all satisfactory to myself or others, on the ancient method. But no sooner did I make this great discovery, than a multitude of rich veins were opened in my mind, and I was able, with a very slight expenditure of time and labour, to supply the columns of a dozen periodicals with essays, tales, and sonnets, not only pleasing to myself but perfectly congenial to the taste of the contemporary public, which has long since given me a place among its choicest favourites. Let me illustrate the foregoing statement by a few examples. Had I been required, under the old régime, to write a chapter of historical romance, full of local and personal allusions and well stuffed with dates and proper names, I might have spent whole years in searching libraries, without being able to assure myself that I was right on any one point of geography or history. But in writing on the new plan, I am freed from the necessity of pausing for a moment to consult authorities or even to recall my long-lost knowledge. I have only to give free loose to my thoughts, and write as fast as I can move the pen, in order to produce any given quantity of matter like the following, which I hereby certify to be the genuine product of my method, furnished instantanè and for this occasion.

## THE FANDANGO OF OSIRIS.

On the green bank of the Ipecacuanah, near the base of the majestic Pampas, lived in early times a saponaceous Barbican, descended from the royal Serf of ancient Opodeldoc. In his small but comfortable saraband, composed of green viaticum and aromatic certiorari, this neglected surrogate enjoyed a varieose retirement with his only child, the fair Sarsaparilla. Oft in the stilly night, the traveller, as he crossed the Gutta Pereha, or gazed from the summit of Papyrus on the valleys of Neuralgia, has heard the voice of this insensate anodyne, as she swept the chords of her bandanna, and poured forth one of the seiatric capsules of her native Gypsum. Sometimes her plastic form was seen, hypothetically muffled in an olla podrida of dark senna, or more abstrusely veiled in a habeas corpus of thin centipede. One morning in the spring of the year 1539, soon after the defeat of the Pragmatic Sanction on the field of Bonafide by the gallant Discount, as the aged Barbican was sitting with his daughter at a table of highly polished emory, partaking of stewed parasangs and neuter verbs, the shrill sound of a chrysolite aroused them, and the form of a Fandango, clad in chloroform and armed with a ealvinistic diaphragm, appeared before them. Sarsaparilla trembled as she gazed upon the obese stranger; then applying her lips to a catapult of silver, which she wore suspended by a bill of lading, she uttered a cameo so subdued and piercing, that the fierce Fandango grasped his tocsin and withdrew into the otoman.

So much for romantic fiction; but this method is equally effective in declamatory eloquence. When a boy at school and college, I could never write a speech to save my life or credit. Why? Because I foolishly waited till I should know what I meant to say, and could find words exactly to express it. But now, you have only to suggest a theme, and

I am ready to declaim upon it ad infinitum. Let us take for example, as the subject of a Fourth of July speech,

## THE FALL OF HUNGARY.

Amidst the wild swell of tumultuous misanthropy, careering on the asteroids of public grief, methinks I see an oleaginous paralogism slowly ascending from the miasmatic vestibules of hapless Hungary. From a thousand viaducts of blooming iodine, the poor mephitic paynims of Bulgaria and Tyrol mingle their beatific sighs with those of aboriginal siroccos. Oh what a diatribe of stalwart curses must distill upon the petrified antennæ of the tyrant, as he sits devout upon his callous throne, and wields his nascent and sporadic sceptre. From the unctuous pinions of the palsied eagle, as he flaps them over the inchoate altar, there exudes a palinode of arid tears, enough to cauterize the iris of a Goth or Vandal, while from every tear an apoplectic whisper fills the lurid ear of benedictine Europe with the galvanizing distich, *Vox populi, Kossuth go brag!*

With equal ease, I can apply my method to the most abstruse metaphysical inquiries, which of old only served to give me a headache or a fit of nausea. At that time, I would just as soon have undertaken to square the circle as to venture an opinion upon any question of philosophy; but now I am ready, at a moment's warning, to grapple with the hardest, for example with the

## DIAGNOSIS OF THE I AND THE NOT-I.

Assuming, as we safely may, that all the reflex actings of the rational idea towards the pole of semi-entity are naturally complicated with a tissue of non-negative impressions, which can only be disintegrated by a process of spontaneous and intuitive abstraction, it inevitably follows, as a self-sustaining corollary, that the isolated and connatural conceptions, formed



in this ante-speculative stage of intellectual activity, must be reflected on the faculty itself, or, to speak with philosophical precision, on the I, when viewed concretely as the not-I; and in this reciprocal self-reproduction, carried on by the direct and transverse action of the Reason and the Understanding, modified of course by those extraneous and illusory perceptions, which can never be entirely excluded from the mutual relations of the pure intelligence on one hand and the mixed operations of the will and the imagination on the other, may be detected, even by an infant eye, the true solution of this great philosophical enigma, the one sole self-developing criterion of the elemental difference between the not-I and the I.

I might multiply these specimens forever, with the utmost ease and pleasure to myself; for it is really delightful to write on currente calamo without the trouble or anxiety of finding either thoughts or words; but my decreasing paper warns me to conclude, and I shall therefore only add one other sample, which indeed I could not possibly omit without doing gross injustice to myself and my discovery. However useful this might be in helping the whole population, old and young, male and female, to write prose with a fertility and ease almost appalling, it would not after all claim a standpoint in the first rank of world-historical discoveries, if it did not afford equal aid in the production of good poetry. I know that it is like showing the brick as a sample of the house to give a single specimen of my poetical manufacture; but as I cannot now do more, and certainly will not do less, I proceed at once to plan and execute a beautiful

IMPROMPTU TO THE SPIRIT OF DREAMS.

How evanescent and marine  
 Are thy chaotic uplands seen,  
     Oh ever sublapsarian moon!  
 A thousand caravans of light  
 Were not so spherically bright,  
     Or ventilated half so soon.

## II.

Methought I stood upon a cone  
Of solid allopathic stone,  
And gazed athwart the breezy skies;  
When lo, from yonder planisphere  
A rapid atrabilious tear  
Was shed by pantomimic eyes.

## III.

Adieu, Miasma, cries a voice,  
In which Aleppo might rejoice,  
So perifocal were its tones;  
Adieu, Miasma, think of me  
Beyond the antinomian sea,  
Which covers my pellucid bones.

## IV.

Again, again, my bark is tossed  
Upon the raging holoeaust  
Of that acidulated sea,  
And diapasons pouring down  
With lunar caustic join to drown  
My transeendental epopee.

With equal ease and equal elegance, I hereby pledge myself to write instanter any quantity of prose or verse, on any subject, known or unknown, at the lowest market prices. Should additional samples be required, I hold myself in readiness to furnish them in any measure, style, or quantity, at a moment's warning, with a view not only to my personal emolument, but also to the demonstration of my darling dogma, that the grand prerequisite to universal authorship is neither genius, sense, nor taste, but unrestricted and irrevocable

*Freedom of Speech.*

## WALTER MINTO, LL. D.,

LATE PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS AND NATURAL PHILOSOPHY  
IN THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY.

It is a matter of regret that so little pains have heretofore been taken to perpetuate the memory of the early professors of the College of New Jersey. Of Wm. Churchill Houston, Walter Minto, John Maclean and William Thompson, all men of distinguished merit, three of whom occupied successively the chair of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and the fourth that of Languages, between the years 1787 and 1808, few memorials are yet before the public. To rescue the memory of forgotten merit from perpetual oblivion is always a grateful task, and such is the object of the present sketch. Of the history and attainments of this learned man, little is known in this country. Although as appears from indisputable evidence, his reputation in Europe for erudition and scientific research was fully established and universally acknowledged; yet in America he lived comparatively obscure, and has attained no posthumous celebrity. The facts which we are about to detail, are derived from an unquestionable source, and will admit the strongest evidence in favour of their authenticity.

Walter Minto was born at the village of Cowdenham, in the county of Merse, in Scotland, on the fifth day of December, 1753. His family, according to his own account, was of Spanish origin, and had once held an elevated rank; but his parents appear to have lived in a state of distressing poverty, occasioned probably by some reverse of fortune. Whatever may have been their situation however, they undoubtedly gave their son, to use his own expression, the education of a gentleman. At the age of fifteen, we find him attending the lectures in the University of Edinburgh, and enjoying the instruction of Hume, Ferguson, Robertson and Blair. That his academical career was not wholly without

distinction, is sufficiently obvious, from a recommendation which he afterwards received and which shall be mentioned in its proper place.

After completing his preparatory studies he turned his attention to Theology, rather it would appear from subsequent events, to meet the expectations of anxious friends, and in compliance with the wishes of a pious father, than from his own unbiassed choice. The time during which he bore the title of a student of divinity, was passed probably as a teacher, in the house of Mr. Watson, a gentleman of Perthshire. During this period his leisure moments were amused in a manner, which plainly shows that his mind was not always engrossed by cold abstractions, to the exclusion of literary taste and fanciful conception. With several periodical works he maintained a constant correspondence, the productions of his pen being marked by a variety which strikingly displayed the versatility of his talents. His contributions soon attracted notice, and were highly valued both by the editors whose labours they relieved, and the public whose curiosity they gratified. To those who knew Dr. Minto, personally or by reputation, only as the votary of abstract science, it may be interesting to learn, that at this early period, he was most distinguished among the writers of the magazines to which he lent his aid, as a poet and a humourist. It is probable, however, that his subsequent devotion to a species of knowledge, which, above all others, diverts the attention from the lighter but more elegant pleasures of literature, effectually debarred him from continuing the pursuit. The publication to whose columns he most largely and frequently contributed, was the "*Gentleman and Lady's Magazine*" of Edinburgh. His communications with the editor were made through a bosom friend of Mr. Minto, a young man of Edinburgh, of congenial spirit and equally attached to the fascinating employment of writing for the public. With this friend he maintained a regular and probably a romantic correspondence. This would at least appear

from a circumstance, which, as attested by himself, it may now be proper to relate.

Like most young men of taste and talents, who have recently been engaged in classical pursuits, Mr. Minto had for years cherished a warm desire to visit the different countries of Europe, and above all, Italy. In this too he found a companion in the friend whom we have mentioned. Their sentiments and wishes on the subject were entirely coincident. Their romantic longing for foreign travel arose at length to such a height that its gratification could no longer be delayed, and as neither was sufficiently rich nor exempt from the controul of others to accomplish the end in an ordinary manner, it was necessary to devise some extraordinary scheme. The method which was finally adopted was to traverse Europe in the garb of Pilgrims, subsisting on the charity of the pious along the way, till they reached the Italian frontier. This singular plot was not only laid, and that with the profoundest secrecy, but on the very point of being executed, when an unexpected occurrence prevented it, by removing the necessity which led to its formation. Mr. Hume sending suddenly for Minto, invited him to become the travelling tutor of two boys who were about to visit Italy for the completion of their education. It is needless to say that the offer was cheerfully accepted; and although his pleasure in the acceptance was probably diminished by the loss of his friend's society; he no doubt looked forward with rapture to so speedy and pleasing an accomplishment of his fond and romantic wishes.

The gentleman, whose sons Mr. Minto had agreed to receive as pupils, was the Hon. George Johnstone, formerly governor of West Florida and member of the British parliament. As Governor Johnstone is well known in American history, as one of the Royal Commissioners, who, in 1778, came over as bearers of the conciliatory bills and agents to bring about a friendly accommodation between the mother country and the colonies, it may not be uninteresting to our



readers to learn something of his history and character. He was a Scotchman and a son of Sir James Johnstone, and had been appointed Governor of Florida by Lord Bute. He was an active member of the House of Commons and a steady opponent of Lord North's ministry. He possessed considerable powers of oratory, and excelled in personal invective. On his return from America, he seceded from his party, and took part with the ministry, and his speeches were marked with great bitterness of feeling towards his former political associates. The other commissioners were the Earl of Carlisle and Mr. William Eden, and as Governor Johnstone had been, throughout his public career, an ardent patriot and steady friend of colonial rights, and had generally been put forward by the opposition as being a bold and animated declaimer to open the debates on the subject of the war, it was supposed that his appointment would be peculiarly acceptable to the American people. During his stay in this country, Governor Johnstone endeavoured through the instrumentality of Mrs. Elizabeth Ferguson, an American lady, married to the British commissary of prisoners, to open a negotiation with General Joseph Reed, a member of Congress from Pennsylvania. The object of this negotiation was to secure the influence of Gen. Reed in promoting a reunion between the two countries, and he was informed that if the object should be effected through his influence, he might command ten thousand pounds and any colonial office in the King's gift. To this offer, General Reed unhesitatingly replied that "he was not worth purchasing, but such as he was, the King of Great Britain was not rich enough to do it." General Reed having communicated these circumstances to Congress, that body issued a manifesto, in which it was declared that "this offer was a direct attempt to corrupt and bribe the Congress of the United States, and that it was not compatible with the honour of Congress to hold any manner of correspondence with George Johnstone, Esq., especially to negotiate with him upon affairs in which the cause of liberty was interested." Governor Johnstone

issued a counter manifesto, and soon after returned to England. We would here notice the fact that the secretary who accompanied the commissioners to America, was Dr. Adam Ferguson, who had been one of the instructors of Mr. Minto during his connexion with the University of Edinburgh. Governor Johnstone appears to have been a man of strong mind and generous feeling; but that these qualities were accompanied by great irascibility and violence of temper, is evident from his subsequent conduct towards Mr. Minto. The latter entered upon his charge in 1778, being then five and twenty years of age, and after a short stay in London, set sail for Italy. The place where he fixed himself with his pupils for the purposes of study, was Pisa, where he resided in the family of Dr. Slop, Professor of Astronomy in the University of that city. It is probable that to this association and the advantages it furnished, his devotion to mathematical science may justly be ascribed. There is no reason to believe, that his mind had been particularly turned to that department previous to his leaving Scotland: we know indeed that the bent of his genius was at that time rather towards literature and the arts. On the other hand, there is sufficient testimony, that during his residence in Italy, he pursued the study of mathematics, and prepared at least a part of those works upon the subject, which still lie in manuscript among his papers, covered with the dust of more than half a century.

After the departure of Mr. Minto from Great Britain, Governor Johnstone sailed for America, on his errand of conciliation. After the abortive result of all that the commissioners could do, and when a war between France and England appeared inevitable, he transmitted to Italy directions for the return of his sons, in time to meet him on his arrival. Mr. Minto prepared, therefore, to leave his situation in Italy, and looked forward to a residence in his native country. He doubtless anticipated much from the patronage of Johnstone, and his expectations were not unreasonable. From what he knew of that gentleman's character and disposition,

he was well assured that if his conduct were approved, the expression of his approbation would be prompt, liberal and substantial. It was not his good fortune, however, to enjoy the favour which he had in prospect. A sudden illness with which the younger of his pupils was seized, when on the point of embarking for Great Britain, detained them in Spain for several months, and this disappointment was soon followed by an angry letter from Governor Johnstone, bitterly reproachful of Minto's person, and warmly resenting his disobedience to positive command. From this display of ungenerous feeling, so cruel to his own sons as well as to their teacher, Minto perceived that he had nothing to expect. In a highly dignified letter, which he despatched without delay, he calmly but proudly resigned all claim upon the patronage of Johnstone; and although the little invalid was not yet restored to health, his anxiety to dissolve the connexion would admit of no delay. He, therefore, embarked as soon as possible on a homeward bound English vessel. They had been but a few days at sea, when they were captured by a French man-of-war and carried into a French port. They were soon released through the intervention of the British consul, and Mr. Minto finding a friend of Governor Johnstone, to whom he resigned his charge, returned expeditiously to Scotland. Whether any further communication passed between them subsequently we are unable to determine.

Mr. Minto now resided in Edinburgh as a teacher of mathematics. His reputation as a man of science appears to have been considerable, arising probably from his correspondence with the philosophers of Great Britain, and several minor publications on the subject of Astronomy. At length, however, he united himself with the Earl of Buchan in the composition of a life of Napier of Merchiston, the inventor of Logarithms. To the Earl was allotted the merely biographical portion of this work; while Dr. Minto—for he had now received the honorary title from the University of Aberdeen—undertook the other and more laborious part, which

consisted chiefly of minute scientific details, and a vindication of Napier's claims to the original invention. This work which is scarcely known in America, was laid in manuscript before the King, and received his approbation. It was no doubt the means of extending Dr. Minto's reputation and bringing him further into public view. At the same time that he was employed in the execution of this design, he was engaged in a scientific correspondence with the Astronomer Royal at Greenwich, and contributed various papers to the archives of the Royal Society.

It is difficult to determine at what period the attention of Dr. Minto was directed to America as a place of residence. From early youth he appears to have been warmly attached to liberal political principles, and to have espoused warmly the cause of American Independence. It is not likely, however, that he had formed any definite plan as to crossing the Atlantic, until after his return from Italy. The representations which he then received from friends who had previously emigrated, as to the state of society, the civil and religious advantages, and the natural charms of the scenery and climate, no doubt had a tendency to create in his mind a disposition to change his abode. His residence in Italy assisted this impression by exciting a desire for more cloudless skies, and less repulsive scenes than those of his native land. However this may be regarded, he sailed for America in 1786. The immediate motive of his departure at this time appears to have been a statement which he had received as to the College of New Jersey. This institution had attained a high reputation on both sides of the Atlantic. With the names of Dickinson and Burr and Edwards and Davies and Finley, the British public had long been familiar. The number of distinguished young men, who year after year went forth from this College, and were rapidly filling the highest offices in the church and State, tended to strengthen and advance that reputation; while an additional interest was thrown around her from the fact that Scotland had furnished the

individual who then occupied the Presidential chair, and whose name was known and honoured wherever learning, piety, and a love of liberty were held in esteem and veneration. The representations which had been made to Dr. Minto respecting this seat of learning, induced him to regard it as a desirable station, where he might enjoy an honorable independence, associate with men of learning, and continue without hindrance or interruption his favourite pursuits. It is believed, however, that before his leaving Scotland, he had received no overture from the authorities of the College; and we find him soon after his arrival in New York, settled as the principal of Erasmus Hall, an institution then recently established at Flatbush in Long Island. From this situation he was called in 1787 to the Professorship of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in the College of New Jersey, as the successor of Dr. Ashbel Green. He accepted the appointment, and immediately removed to Princeton.

From this period, the life of Dr. Minto furnishes little variety of incident. He found himself at Princeton, in the society of a few but very distinguished literary men. The faculty of Nassau Hall, was at that time, perhaps, composed of men more remarkable for learning, and more favourably known to the public, than that of any other College in the Union. John Witherspoon, Samuel Stanhope Smith, Walter Minto, and John Maclean formed a corps of teachers, whose aggregate value is not often to be found within the compass of so small a number. Of his colleagues and his pupils, Dr. Minto enjoyed the confidence in an unusual degree. He was the treasurer of the corporation, and received continual applications from anxious parents, to receive their children beneath his roof, on account of the advantages which they supposed would be enjoyed within the limits of his domestic circle. With respect to his method of instruction, it need only be stated here, that the text books in Mathematics which his pupils used, were prepared by his own hand.

With the exception of the *Life of Napier*, Dr. Minto left behind him no published works as the evidence of his



learning and attainments ; but we have seen the manuscript of his Mathematical works, arranged and prepared by himself for publication, the plates having been engraved and the work completed and ready for the press, when his plans were arrested, and the publication of the work prevented by his death in 1796. The only production of his pen, which was ever given to the public in America, so far as we have been able to ascertain, was an oration delivered at Princeton on his inauguration as Professor on the evening preceding the annual commencement of the College in 1788, and which was printed in the same year at Trenton by Isaac Collins. The subject of this discourse was the Origin, Progress and Importance of the Mathematical Sciences ; and it is an earnest and eloquent defence of the subjects of his profession. He declared in the outset, that he would not attempt to entertain his audience with eulogies on the Founders, Trustees, and Faculty of the College, as their works sufficiently praised them ; and that as he was devoted to a study, in which the fewest and simplest terms were used, he begged them to dispense with those ornaments, which usually distinguished inaugural orations. He repelled in a forcible and indignant manner the charge frequently made that this science tended to make men skeptics in every thing which was not susceptible of mathematical demonstration ; he declared it to be the very handmaid of religion, and that if it were possible for a student of that branch of science to be wanting in religious reverence, he would rank him with those whose understanding God had taken away. The discourse concluded with an address to the Supreme Being, in which he prayed that the interests of science and literature might be prospered in the United States, that these interests, might be ever subservient to the promotion of liberty, happiness and virtue, that this rising and extensive empire might be preserved from the ill-boding spirit of conquest, and continued as a secure and happy asylum to the oppressed in all quarters of the Globe, that the inhabitants of the eastern hemisphere might be enlightened in the knowledge of the rights of mankind and the

arts of government and peace, that truth and reason might obtain a glorious and everlasting victory over error and violence, and that all the nations of the world might be instructed in the ways of uprightness. Dr. Minto appears to have looked back with great satisfaction upon that portion of his life which was spent in Italy, and declares in this oration that Italy from having been the scene of the noblest actions, and the mistress of Europe, in the arts and sciences and in civilization, is in the eyes of a philosopher the most interesting spot on the surface of the globe. The name of Galileo, which frequently occurs in this discourse, reminds us that we once saw among the papers of Dr. Minto, a manuscript obtained by him while resident at Pisa, which purported to be an autograph of the Great Astronomer, on which was endorsed, in the handwriting of Dr. Minto, the words "The Great Galileo." We will close this sketch with a simple statement of the fact, that several original treatises, and several valuable translations by Dr. Minto, together with a large portion of his scientific correspondence with Slop of Italy and Rittenhouse in America, are still in preservation but unpublished and unknown. Dr. Minto was married after his removal to Princeton to Miss Mary Skelton, and his widow survived until the year 1824, but they left no descendants. Dr. Minto died in Princeton, on the 21st day of October, 1796, in the forty-fourth year of his age. He was buried in the grave-yard at Princeton, in which are interred the illustrious men who preceded and were associated with him in the Faculty of the College. A plain marble slab covers his remains, which bears the following simple inscription:

WALTER MINTO, LL.D.

Professor of Mathematics and Philosophy

In the College of New Jersey.

Was born

In the County of Merse, in Scotland,

Dec. 6th, 1753.

And died in this Town,

October 21st, 1796.

## NEW BOOKS.

PEOPLE I HAVE MET, or Pictures of Society and People of Mark, drawn under a thin veil of Fiction. By N. Parker Willis. New York, Baker & Scribner. 1850.

The reputation of Mr. Willis as an elegant and fascinating writer has long been established, and we think the present work will compare favourably with any of his former productions.

WARAGA, or the charms of the Nile. By William Furniss. New York, Baker & Scribner, 1850.

The title of this book, the author informs us in the preface, is a term applied by the Arabs to all charms in general; and he expresses the hope, that this one may prove potent in dispelling the ennui of his readers. The volume commences with the author's entrance into Egypt, arrival at Alexandria, and journey from thence to Cairo, both of which cities he describes; and is principally devoted to his excursions up and down the Nile, his visit to Thebes and other ruins, his passage across the desert and his ascent of the pyramids. The work is accompanied by eight handsome illustrations.

CAPRICES. New York: 1850. pp. 154. 12 mo.

A tantalizing little volume; no name of author, no preface, no hint of his latitat; whether of Charleston or Boston, married or single, a doctor of physic or a doctor of divinity. The very title stirs our choler. We should pronounce the author to be a professional man, if he did not write such smooth verses, and a man of the world if they were not so thoughtful. As we fear from this beginning that he is in danger of the fate which Locke foretells for successful poets, we utter our warning voice, beseeching him to enter on a course of counter-irritants, as for example (supposing him to be a doctor) on law-studies. The surprise and novelty of drawing a declaration, or the pleasantry of Coke upon Littleton would perhaps draw these humours out of him. But the volume is so rapidly bought up, that we scarcely hope our prescription will be followed.